

Message Text

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73

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SS-15 NSC-05 CCO-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR./HLK

APPROVED BY P - JOSEPH J. SISCO

SS-O: JHOGANSON

NEA/P - MR. SHERMAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

INFO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: VN/A

TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON,ALFRED L., JR.)

SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S
VISIT TO NORTH AFRICA

1. WE PLAN NO ANNOUNCEMENT OF ATHERTON'S OCTOBER 18-24
VISIT TO TUNISIA, ALGERIA AND MOROCCO AND WANT TO PLAY IT
IN AS LOW KEY AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN DEVELOPMENTS OF LAST
FEW DAYS RE SPANISH SAHARA, HOWEVER, THERE WILL INEVITABLY
BE SPECULATION THAT HIS VISIT TO MOROCCO AT LEAST IS RE-
LATED TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. IF QUERIED, WE WILL RESPOND AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE:
ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON IS TRAVELING TO TUNIS TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING OF THE U.S.-TUNISIAN JOINT
COMMISSION. THAT MEETING AND HIS ATTENDANCE HAVE BEEN
SCHEDULED FOR SOME TIME. WHILE HE IS IN THE AREA, SECRE-
TARY KISSINGER HAS SUGGESTED TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF ALGERIA
AND MOROCCO THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEND MR. ATHERTON TO
DISCUSS MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WITH THEIR LEADERS.
THEY HAVE AGREED TO THIS SUGGESTION, AND MR. ATHERTON
WILL THEREFORE BE PROCEEDING TO ALGIERS AND RABAT ON HIS
WAY BACK TO WASHINGTON. CLOSE QUOTE.

3. IF QUSRIED AS TO WHETHER MIDDLE EAST SITUATION WILL BE
DISCUSSED, WE WILL REPLY THAT THIS IS CLEARLY AMONG
THE MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND WE EXPECT THERE WILL
BE AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT.

4. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON'S TRIP IS RELATED TO
DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE SAHARA, WE WILL REPLY
THAT THE TRIP WAS PLANNED BEFORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
AND THAT HIS TALKS IN MOROCCO WILL COVER A RANGE OF
MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL QUESTIONS. NO DOUBT THESE
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WILL INCLUDE THE SAHARA SITUATION.

5. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON IS CARRYING ANY U.S.
PROPOSALS ON THE SAHARA, WE WILL REPLY THAT HE IS
NOT: WE, OF COURSE, ARE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS WITH
RESPECT TO THE SAHARA WITH INTEREST SINCE THEY INVOLVE
GOVERNMENTS WITH WHOM WE HAVE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY TIES
BUT OUR POSITION REMAINS THAT THIS IS A MATTER BEST

DEALT WITH THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE PARTIES.

6. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON WILL BE MAKING CONTACT WITH
PALESTINIANS, WE WILL REPLY NO.

7. ACTION ADDRESSEES MAY INFORM HOST GOVERNMENTS OF
FOREGOING PRESS GUIDANCE AND MAY DRAW UPON IT IF
QUERIED. WE LEAVE TO HOST GOVERNMENTS ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS
THEY WISH TO MAKE WITH RESPECT TO APPOINTMENTS MR.
ATHERTON WILL HAVE WHILE IN THEIR COUNTRIES. INGERSOLL

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